

Application No.: 10/538,058**Docket No.: 4590-417****REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 9-18 remain pending in the application.

Applicant appreciatively notes that claims 11, 12, 14, 15 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. Applicant requests that the objection be held in abeyance pending allowance of amended claim 1.

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 13, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Thompson et al US Patent 5,748,451. In response, claims 6, 7 and 8 have been incorporated into claim 1 and are believed to be patentable over Thompson for the reasons discussed below.

Thompson does not disclose a "braced" structure as defined in claim 1 but a structure with "stiffeners" as shown in Figures 1-5 of Thompson. Stiffeners are thick mechanical reinforcements. A braced structure includes a brace which is a small-diameter cable (previously presented claim 6) or a thin metal blade (previous claim 7) and means for mechanically tensioning the brace (previous claim 8). To further emphasize the difference between Thompson and the present invention, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of the earlier claims 6, 7 and 8. These mechanical means are not described by Thompson. For at least these reasons, claim 1 should be patentable and the rejection should be withdrawn. Claims 2-4, 6-10, 13, 16 and 17 recite additional, important limitations and should be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1 as well as on their own merits. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

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Claim 5 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thompson et al US Patent 5,748,451 in view of Hsieh et al US Patent 7,161,238. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Hsieh does not overcome the deficiencies discussed above with respect to Thompson. Claim 5 recites additional, important limitations and should be patentable along with claim 1 as well as on its own merit. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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